

Hard Times. No 2.

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As an evidence of the correctness of our position, in article No 1, "That a waste of resources is, a prolific source of hard times;" let us now look at a few statistical facts. Bread, costs this nation \$505,000,000 a year. Meat costs us \$303,000,000 for the same length of time; making a total of \$808,000,000 per annum for these two important articles of diet; while for the same length of time it costs this nation \$500,000,000 for tobacco, and nearly \$900,000,000 for alcoholic beverages. Thus it costs our people more for liquor than it does for bread, and more for tobacco than it does for meat. The one an irritative nerve stimulant, that produces among us 500,000 drunkards, and sacrifices 60,000 human beings annually; inducing misery, wretchedness, want, and woe, wherever its strong trail is found: producing 32 per cent of all our diseases, 82 per cent of all our crimes, 70 per cent of our insanity 80 per cent of our idiots, 94 per cent of our pauperism and entailing on the industrial resources of the country a continuous drain, which unless checked by timely legislation bids fair to bankrupt this nation inside of the next fifty years. Is it any marvel that destitution reigns supreme in a home where this foul serpent of perdition consumes all the necessities for human existence; and that the wail of "Hard times," is wrung from breaking hearts—forced out through fevered throats—over blistered lips and vibrates on God's pure air, till living and dead, saved and damned may hear it, and start in wild amaze, that such a sound should ever be heard in the empire of a God of love where mercy is rained on the "just and the unjust" *The other a pure Narcotic poison*—with exceedingly limited therapeutical action—a pure nerve depressant: in which even American civilization has failed to improve on the savage modes of its use. Chewing poisons the saliva and impairs the gastric secretion—Smoking poisons the air and depleats the tissue of the lungs. Snuffing, irritates the mucous membrane of the nose, and air passages of the lungs, and induces disease. In any and every mode of use, it is a filthy, nauseous, Narcotic poison, depressing vitality, poisoning the secretions, producing disease, and constitutional enervation of all the physical forces, and yet God's blessings and bounties are wasted for this filthy poison; even by professing Christians, who cannot pay their honest debts and whose families live in squalor and filth, and are clothed in tatters and rags. I know a church member in this state in this exact condition, his clothes are continuously stained with his dribbling saliva—the corners of his mouth incessantly stained with emperhumatic oil, and yet he would expect to receive and impart the salutation. Excuse me, I would as soon salute the *Mephitis Americana* as such an one. If the "blood of Jesus Christ God's son cleanseth from all sin" does it not also "purify from all filthiness of the flesh?" If not, I fear it has not done much for us. A Jew would not dare to insult his maker by perfuming his burnt offering with tobacco, but a Christian, yes a Christian minister will take the chances on insulting his maker, by pouring tobacco fumes in his face in prayer. An idle habit, a vile practice, a physical poison, costing this nation \$600,000,000 a year, and we are Christians *i. e.* "Doing all for the Glory of God."

American Christians look at this fact, Home and Foreign Missions cost us as a people \$500,000, Tobacco costs us \$600,000,000, Public education costs us \$85,000,000, Alcoholic beverages cost us directly nearly \$900,000,000—Or \$95,000,000 raised to bless and save the world, nearly \$1500,000,000 spent to beggar, curse and damn it. If every member in the Brethren church who uses tobacco would stop, and give the proceeds to Ashland College, its debt would soon be paid. Bro. Holsinger might be with his family and engaged in saving souls, and building up the church; those who stop would become better, purer, cleaner, sweeter Christians. Fitter "vessels for the Master's use." "Hard times" would disappear from that home and the "College," send a soul would be doubly blest. Brethren, is it any wonder that with these wastes of funds we have had times in the nation, in the church, in the home? Ministers unpaid, churches

unbuilt, college debts pressing, slow progress towards Millennial glory. Then look at our balance sheet as seen by the eye of Omnipotent love. \$95,000,000 to save and bless, \$1500,000,000 to beggar and curse, \$95,000,000 to raise bless and build up, \$1500,000,000 to sink, curse and pull down, and this, Christian, *i. e.* Christ like: is it? Say, is it? If we are "Stewards in the household of faith," and must give "an account of our stewardship" even the "Unjust steward," furnishes no parallel to our case. God help us to look at these things.

They Shall Shine as Stars.

I do not know that Mary was a strong-minded woman, or that she was wealthy or beautiful; perhaps she did not move in the best society; but there is one thing I do know—she could love. Wherever the gospel of the Son of God is preached, that story is told out. I suppose Mary forgot all about herself, but she loved the Master and she poured that ointment out upon him. Eighteen centuries have rolled away, but the name of Mary of Bethany is as fresh as ever it was. I suppose there is no woman's name so fresh as hers, except the name of Mary the mother of the Savior. I can imagine some man when Christ was on the earth, prophesying that that story would be told in the nineteenth century; and not a man on the face of the earth would have believed it. We look back on the days of miracles, but we forget we are living in the days of miracles. Missionary societies in New York and London have put the story of Mary into two hundred and fifty languages, and have sent out millions of copies of it. That story will live as long as the church of God is upon earth. She made her name immortal by that one act. Nothing you do for Jesus Christ is small. We want, to-day men and women who are willing to do.

I suppose if the reporters had been living in the days of Mary, and heard on the streets of Jerusalem that she had broken that alabaster box upon him, they would not have thought it was worth noticing; but it outlived everything else that took place then. If they had seen that widow cast those two mites into the treasury of the Lord, they would have said, "There will be no one in Jerusalem that will care for that."

But see! Eighteen centuries have rolled away, and that story has outlived everything else that occurred there.—D.L. Moody.

The Necessity of Prayer.

The first true sign of spiritual life, prayer, is also the means of maintaining it. Man can as well live physically without breathing, as spiritually without praying. There is a class of animals—the whale family—neither fish nor sea-fowl, that inhabit the deep. It is their home, they never leave it for the shore; yet, though swimming beneath its waves, and sounding its darkest depths, they have ever and anon to rise to the surface that they may breathe the air. Without that these monarchs of the deep could not exist in the dense element in which they live, and move, and have their being. And something like what is imposed on them by a physical necessity, the Christian has to do by a spiritual one. It is by ever and anon ascending up to God, by rising through prayer into a loftier, purer region for supplies of divine grace, that he maintains his spiritual life. Prevent these animals from rising to the surface, and they die for want of breath; prevent him from rising to God, and he dies for want of prayer. Let me breathe, says a man gasping, or else I die. Let me pray, says the Christian, or else I die.

GUTHRIE.

The praises that a man bestows must be valued according to his habits in the matter of praising; and adjectives which from one man would mean much will disappoint from another.

Sorrow is not selfish, but many persons are in sorrow entirely selfish. It makes them so important in their own eyes that they seem to have a claim on all that people can do for them.

If we would have powerful minds we must think; if we would have faithful hearts we must love; if we would have powerful muscles we must labor. These include nearly all that is of much value in this life.

The Church and the Individual.

It is a fact worthy of note that our Lord, when he was on earth, did not organize a Church, nor did he give commandment touching the organization of his people. He, indeed, spoke of his Church; but that reference was rather to the aggregation of disciples than to the organization. No doubt the formally organized Church is proper and legitimate, and was necessary and inevitable in the development of Christianity. It is the outgrowth of that principle of order which is said to be "Heaven's first law." When God took his people out of Egypt they were not led up as a mob, but went up in "ranks." And so, when our Lord fed the multitude, he caused them to sit down "in ranks," also. We have no sympathy with the everlasting outcry against the Church which is current in some quarters. Nor do we believe that it is an "apostate organization," from which God's people are to come out and be separate. On the other hand, we have no doubt that far too much stress is laid on organization, and that the Church, as an organization, is magnified, in comparison with the individuals who compose it, far out of proportion. It is not the corps organization that goes into battle and fights, but the soldiers who compose that corps. No doubt they fight the better for the organization; but, after all, it is the individual soldiers fighting together, each one realizing his responsibility as a soldier, that enables any given division or corps to win the day.

Now the Church, as we commonly use that term, is only the name of an organization under which individual Christians have come together and mutually agreed to live in fellowship and serve the Lord in concord.

When we speak of law, we refer to what has been observed as to the working of certain forces in Nature or society. Law does not work; but the manner of that which works we call law. So the Church does not work; but those individuals work who are banded together for mutual fellowship and service.

When our Lord left the earth he called his disciples and committed to them his commandments, touching the work they had to do in the world. He committed nothing to the Church; he delivered no precepts to the Church; he made no promises to the Church; but everywhere he recognizes only the individual disciple. In the day when he will judge his servants as touching their work it will never be as a part of an organization. As he gave to every man his work, so will he judge every man according to his work. There will be no Churches at the judgment seat of Christ. The question will not be asked whether we belonged to the Church of the Pilgrims, the Broadway Tabernacle or the First Church of Podunk, but how each one of us has used our talent. Every man shall receive according as his work has been. Many a man and woman who have been identified with some church which has gained the reputation of being a working church, will, in the judgment, be found wanting; for the reason that they had nothing to show the Master in the way of work or service rendered on their part. In vain shall they tell or speak of what "our church" has done. It will not then and there be a question of what the Church has done, but what the individual has done. Every man's work shall be tried, what sort it is.

We are led to these remarks by reason of the act that, in looking over our churches, we are pained to find that, while many "churches" represent a great amount of service, there is scarcely one within the circle of our acquaintance but that is cumbered with a large proportion of individuals who seem never to realize that they have any responsibility. They are content to attend the Sabbath services as often as it is convenient, and to give a pittance, of money in a general collection; a sum they would be ashamed to give if they were called upon individually. As for service, it is so well understood that they take no part in that that they are never expected to do anything in that line. They have lost their individuality in the organization. They are content to belong to a strong church, without adding to it any individual strength. They are a name and a number only.